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ABSTRACT

This review analyzes literature on educational innovation dissemination and adoption. Emphasis is placed on (1) factors influencing successful adoption of innovations and (2) the role of school personnel and regional education laboratories as change agents. A 77-item bibliography of relevant literature is included. (RA)

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Introduction Plans (Marketing Plans)

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INTRODUCTION PLANS (MARKETING PLANS)

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FOREWORD

In mid-June 1970 the Clearinghouse received an urgent request from Central ERIC in the U.S. Office of Education to prepare selected bibliographies and brief analyses of literature on eleven critical topics related to school organization and administration.

The bibliographies and analyses were required by USOE's National Center for Educational Research and Development (formerly the Bureau of Research) in planning its new program of directed research and development. School organization and administration is one of four areas of education chosen by the center to receive concentrated research and development assistance. The others are reading, early childhood, and vocational education.

Through a joint effort the Clearinghouse staff completed the bibliographies and analyses for shipment to USOE by July 2, the deadline date.

The analysis and bibliography combined here focus on (1) evidence of means of disseminating new instructional programs, and (2) evidence of how to foster local adoption of new instructional programs.

The literature cited in the bibliography and analyzed in the paper was drawn from a search of the two ERIC index catalogs, Research in Education and Current Index to Journals in Education, and from the following non-ERIC sources: Books in Print, Cumulative Book Index, Education Index, Public Affairs Information Service, Sociological Abstracts, Social Sciences and Humanities Index, and Book Review Digest. Although the urgency of the request precluded a full and comprehensive search and analysis of the literature, the reviews and bibliographies are intended to assess accurately some of the current developments and emerging trends on the topic.

Many of the documents cited in the bibliography can be ordered from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service. Instructions for ordering these documents are given at the end of the bibliography.

Philip K. Piele
Director

Analysis of Literature on
INTRODUCTION PLANS (MARKETING PLANS)

Increasing numbers of case studies, technical guides, and theory-oriented reports are appearing that bear upon the successful dissemination of new instructional programs and the fostering of their local adoption. This review of recent literature distinguishes these reports and articles in four categories: (1) case studies of educational innovation dissemination, (2) theory-oriented studies that draw upon particular instances of educational innovation to determine the factors influencing their successful adoption and dissemination, (3) studies that focus on particular school personnel as determinants of innovation adoption, and (4) reports that define the national network of regional educational laboratories as agents of adoption and diffusion.

Case Studies of Educational Innovation Dissemination

Reports of ten studies describe specific innovative instructional programs and outline procedures for their successful adoption at the local level.

Feldhusen and Szabo (1969) regard CAI, or the computer-assisted instruction movement, as the major educational development of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Their extensive review of the literature amounts to a substantive discussion of the problems involved in the successful adoption of CAI. Information sources on CAI are described; the theoretical bases for CAI and programmed instruction, its closely related antecedent, are discussed; and a bibliography of sixty-one items on the development and adoption of the growing range of CAI programs is included.

Fox and Lippitt (1967) reported on a project involving a state teachers organization and teacher teams in local school systems to demonstrate new teaching practices. The study indicated the need for a vastly improved flow of information to teachers about available resources, for positive interpersonal relations among teaching colleagues, and for inservice education activities to develop a climate supportive of innovation.

Geis (1968) outlined a program for the training of Instructional Systems Consultants as change agents to guide continuing, systematic innovations in the field of foreign language instruction.

Green (1966) described a two-year project sponsored by the Colorado State Department of Education to increase the use of new audiovisual instructional media by Colorado schools. Dissemination procedures included are multimedia demonstration, workshops, team visitations, a twelve-week course in media utilization, and a followup consultation service. Results of the project, differentiated by types of dissemination procedures, included an increase in the number of audiovisual directors, a liberalization of equipment purchasing policies, an increase in clerical assistance, and a favorable change in teacher opinions.

Mayhew (1967) discussed some of the new techniques and practices for generating change in colleges and universities, including use of television and other audiovisual media, flexible class scheduling, new grading methods, interdisciplinary courses, independent study, and cooperative work programs. Adoption of innovations will be expedited especially by faculty workshops and strong administrative support.

Peluso (1968) described the successful adoption by twenty-five schools in the Chicago area (23 high schools and two colleges) of Operation COMPU/TEL, a time-sharing computer network designed to give practical experience in learning computer skills at relatively low cost. Lectures, demonstrations, and teacher workshops were used to inform both students and faculty of the importance of learning data processing and the possibility of computer-oriented learning, especially

at the secondary level.

The Texas Small Schools Project (1969) sought to improve education through talented-youth seminars, health career days, multiple classes, supervised correspondence courses, nongraded elementary classes, flexible scheduling, team teaching, and student science demonstrators. The report includes a discussion of implementation activities.

Assessing the man-machine interface in the Palo Alto, California, Unified School District, Tondow (1967) explicated the systems approach and the use of computer-based information services as increasingly important to the successful adoption of educational innovations.

Valencia (1969) reported on sixteen selected educational and community programs for Spanish-speaking people in the South and Southwest, with an assessment of each program and recommendations for dissemination and implementation of the project model. Innovative programs include bilingual education, a video-oral English instructional approach, and an adult training center.

The Wayne County Intermediate School District (1968) reported on a curriculum development project designed to identify, develop, and test objectives and strategies to change educational programs in a suburban junior high school and an innercity senior high school, seeking to identify, create, and implement useful and satisfying experiences for delinquent as well as nondelinquent students.

Theory Oriented Studies

In the area of theory and practice, a number of writers have drawn upon particular instances of innovation and adoption to define and illustrate critical aspects of the diffusion-adoption process in the field of education.

Carter (1966) compared diffusion efforts in education with those in other fields, especially the military. Studies have demonstrated that (1) the transition from research to development to use is not a straight-forward process, (2)

interpersonal communication among successful innovator-adoptors is inclined to be informal and largely on a person-to-person basis, (3) strong leadership is essential, (4) funding is loosely controlled, and (5) the organizational environment is adaptive rather than authoritarian. Carter described instances of successful and unsuccessful procedures for adoption and related the essentials of the traveling seminar project, more fully reported by Richland (1965).

Gross and others (1968) reported on an extensive seven-month field study to determine the theoretical bases for the implementation of a major innovation in an elementary school, a new role for teachers who were to serve as catalysts for pupil learning. The study determined that the implementation of an innovation may be a function of six basic conditions: (1) the degree to which members of an organization have a clear understanding of an innovation, (2) the extent to which they are capable of behaving in accordance with new role expectations required by the innovation, (3) their willingness to make the necessary effort, (4) the degree to which the required materials and equipment are available, (5) the degree to which organizational arrangements are compatible with the innovation, and (6) the degree to which management carries out its responsibilities in the implementation phase of an innovation.

Moore and Mizuba (1969) briefly reviewed a number of successful and unsuccessful innovation diffusion efforts in fields other than education. They sought to demonstrate to the educational practitioner as a diffusing agent the importance of (1) establishing an acceptable image of the innovation's source, (2) effectively communicating the innovation's objectives and functions, and (3) incorporating the nature of the receiver into the diffusion process.

One of the most comprehensive efforts to determine effective ways to accomplish the widespread adoption of educational innovations is described by Richland (1965). A nationwide study was conducted by the System Development Corporation, under a

contract awarded by the U.S. Office of Education, to evaluate the traveling seminar technique as an effective dissemination activity. During the period of May 11-15, 1964, visits were made by four groups, each comprised of thirty educational administrators and a tour leader, to school sites with outstanding innovations, located in four regions of the United States--southern, eastern, midwestern, and western. Immediately following the site visits the four groups of educators met for a second week at the SDC facility at Santa Monica, California, where they were joined for a review of the traveling seminars by consultants, SDC specialists, and key innovators from the schools visited.

Study results reported by Richland include: (1) The traveling seminar and followup conference procedure clearly facilitate the effective dissemination of educational innovations, (2) measurable attributes of school districts relate to their innovative behavior, and (3) the local superintendent's attitude toward innovation is a significant variable in the introduction of innovations in school districts. The report describes the development of the project and includes a statistical analysis of data derived by questionnaires, interviews, and observations. Among the many innovations observed were team teaching, continuous progress plan, ungraded high school, language laboratories, closed circuit educational television, flexible scheduling, educational media center, and programmed instruction.

Rogers (1968a) discussed the problems of successfully adopting innovations in the large modern university. He outlined five strategies for change to speed up the diffusion process, the primary objective being a self-renewing university.

School Personnel as Determinants of Innovation Adoption

As educational innovations have been introduced into particular schools and school districts, studies have been conducted to determine the degree to which various members of the educational community influence the successful adoption of these innovations. Of primary importance are the characteristics and behaviors

of school superintendents and teachers, with school board members and the community at large occupying a secondary role.

Carlson (1965), Keil (1969), and Kohl (1969) stressed the role of the superintendent and the administrative structure in the successful adoption of an educational innovation. Edgarton (1969), McCarthy (1969), and Nussel and Johnson (1969) focused on the importance of the teacher's role and the need to identify the innovative teacher as well as to develop both peer and administrator support for the implementation of new approaches to improve the classroom learning environment. Christie and Scribner (1969) identified characteristics and behaviors of superintendents, teachers, and board members that are positively related to the successful adoption of educational innovations.

Regional Educational Laboratories as Agents of Diffusion

The winter 1970 issue of the Journal of Research and Development in Education is devoted to a review of the principles and practices of the fifteen federally funded regional educational laboratories. Three articles particularly relate to the diffusion of educational innovations. Becker described the diffusion strategies of seven regional laboratories, defining the primary criteria and factors concerned with the diffusion of Individually Prescribed Instruction in mathematics at the elementary school level. Schmidtlein refered to twelve programs being developed by the laboratories as "programs to assist educational institutions to adopt and effectively utilize improved practices," appending a list of the laboratories with their addresses and specific developmental programs. Schutz identified major components in the development of a new instructional practice, stressing the primary responsibilities and interrelationships of significant persons in the total development process.

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